

THE RUTLAND HERALD.

to go on with the extension I had. Suppose the unexpended balance at the year to be only twelve millions, increase over that of the present revenues; that four millions, with the U.S. stock, amounts to twelve millions, to the \$6,294,000 or before mentioned, and therefore, the sum of seventy three millions would be in the Treasury at the end of the year drawn out. The proceeds of the for the three past years, which the land bill distribute, together with those of the present fiscal estimate, may be put down at 30 millions, the sum to be distributed 36 millions, and we are to be appropriated to the ordinary permanent the enormous sum of 35 millions for the last year, and greater by 14 millions than estimates of the Secretary, ordinary and extraordinary, for the expenditure of this. But, shall not particular estimate of the condition of the country for the coming year, for although the land bill distribute the proceeds for 1837? I mean wholly unnecessary. There no manner of revenue from the customs alone, for revenue, will be abundantly sufficient for all of the Government, but the distribution for the year, will be under the perfect control of its next session, and may be recalled if I could, to satisfy the House that the welfare of the country require its passage. This undertaking, I am met in the outset with against which the demonstrative reasoning of all calculations cannot be interposed; with more powerful than those coming in the shape of stirring eloquence, obstacles which art individual self-examination and independent man removes—the obstacles of prejudice and bias. So, the great misfortune of this measure is that it is a bad measure, but that majority, it has got a bad name. I sincerely the good of the country, that it bore the name popular politician, rather than that of a person. I wish it would then pass the House by voice. So, this ought not to be considered a personal. It cannot operate for the particular benefit of, or of any particular section. It will operate on the People and on the whole country; several gentlemen may have heretofore thought to it, however they may have firmly voted on it presented under circumstances as entirely as they may, without masking themselves liable to the eight iniquity, give it their support. Heretofore, the event of there being a divided was a matter of calculation and care. Now the existence of the surplus is uncertain some as established fact, so which we are called some way to act. Will gentlemen suffer the surplus to be squandered by the central Government object which, when accomplished, will sectional benefit on the country, rather than themselves the labor of independent thinking on of such deep importance to their constituents? They suffer a personal bias, perhaps hastily imbibed influence of high party excitement, to shut out from the light which fact and reason may this question? Certainly they will not. Gen. will examine this measure with fairness and candor, having done so, I cannot doubt the conclusion they will arrive. They must and will unite in the distribution.

Chairman, I have said that I regretted this measure was connected with the name of a distinguished statesman. Not so, that I will pluck a single hair from the brow of that individual have had the honor, from my youth up, through all through evil report, to his political friends. Know claim it as an honor; and when the party cause shall have passed away; when the fame of that individual shall become matter, and he claimed as the common property of the when men shall wonder at the delusion, which led on his contemporaries, my children will claim honor to be able to say of me, My parent only of the torrent of popular clamor, and always did. So, great or may be my regard for any individual, my regard for my country is still greater; and as I do that this measure is of the highest interest to the welfare of our country, and to the permanence of our republican system, I would willingly the merit of its success! it could be justly done, most violent political opponent. In the hope, sir, a vain one—of conciliating the good will who, from the name of this measure, may have taken up an unfavorable opinion of it, and for of doing justice to other statesmen of our country particularly to my immediate predecessor on the House, I take occasion to say, that although measure of distribution has become the adopted child distinguished Senator to whom I have alluded, it wears his dress, and has taken his name, yet he no just claim to the percentage of its leading principle.

Without going back to an earlier period, and noticing various suggestions and propositions of great individuals, which had been made both in & of Congress, it will be found that, as early as 1826, in anticipation that as soon as the public could be paid off, the revenue of the country would the wants of the Government, an honorable Senator New Jersey, now Secretary of the Navy brought a proposition for distributing annually among parts of the country, a sum equal to the revenue of the States, accompanied by a bill not distributing among the States, according to their representative population, five million annually for five years, ending with 1831. The recollection of gentleman will suffice to confirm the statement which I now make, his measure of distribution was for several years, in parts of the country, favorite one with the friends present Chief Magistrate. It had received attention, and was deemed so important, that Gen. made the subject a part of his first message to us. In that message delivered December 1, 1826, commences with much eloquence and force some of us, which were in future to be apprehended from this revenue, under which the country is now laboring. He then proceeds, & I will read to you these evils, says the Message, "it appears to be the most safe, just and federal disposition which be made of the surplus revenue, would be its apportionment among the several States, according to their representation, and should that measure not be warranted by the Constitution, that it would be referred to the States as amendment authority." So, the President then deemed this measure of distribution so important, that constitutional objections to be found to present obstacles in the way of its accomplishment he would have then removed, even by the difficult process of an amendment of the Constitution. I do not find in the President's views with any serious constitutional objections, but others of expediency, seem to have been made from quarter, which the President, in his next annual message proceeds to discuss in detail, and to remove. It is what remarkable that the four objections which stated by the President and answered, have since among the most prominent ones made in the land.

The objections which are formally stated in the message, seem to have been made from quarter, which the President, in his next annual message proceeds to discuss in detail, and to remove. It is what remarkable that the four objections which stated by the President and answered, have since among the most prominent ones made in the land. To the ratio of distribution; 2. That it tends to produce increased taxation; 3. That the States independently use the funds; and lastly, that it creates an improper dependence of the States on the General Government. Sir, the argument of the President is as clear on these points, and is entirely conclusive were it not for its great length, I would ask permission of the committee for the Clerk to read it. But the which I have prepared for myself to occupy the time of the committee is already far spent, that I

want more time. I confined it to the attention of all those who may sit upon the points of disengagement, nothing further intended to remove their doubts, and those who continue making the objections as presenting arguments which they will be willing to consider, how they are in answer to these own judgments, and to their constituents. You well know that this measure of distribution was rare, whatever it may be, a favorite with your own State; that in 1827 it received the strong recommendation of Gen. Clinton in his message; that it was also recommended by Gov. Thompson in 1821, and that, at the same session of your Legislature, a resolution approving it, passed your House of Assembly, by an unanimous vote; but as the particular attention of the committee has already been called to these proportions from New York, by other gentlemen, I will not dwell on them.

You will notice, sir, that all the proportions which I have not mentioned, contemplated a distribution of the revenue without reference to the source from which it was obtained, and included the proceeds of the public lands, as well as the revenue derived from the customs. But the proceeds of the public lands have always been looked upon extending upon a different footing from the revenue raised from other sources. I have not extended my researches very far back, but I find that in February 1826, by the standing committee of this House on the Public Lands, Mr. Strong, one of its members from N.Y. made a report to the House recommending an annual appropriation of a portion of the net proceeds of the public lands for the support of schools, and of appropriating the same among the States in proportion to their representation. In February, 1829, a resolution was adopted by the House, motion of Mr. Stevenson, of Pennsylvania, a political friend of the present President, raising a committee to inquire into the expediency of distributing annually all the money arising from the sales of the public lands among the several States, in the same proportion. This resolution, also, produced a report favorable to the measure. On the 27th of December, 1829, my predecessor in this House (Gen. Hunt) introduced a resolution directing "that committee on Indian Lands to inquire into the expediency of appropriating the net annual proceeds of the sales of the public lands among the several States, for the purposes of education and internal improvement, in proportion to the representation of each in the House of Representatives." This resolution was discussed from day to day, during the morning hours, of the 19th of January, when it was adopted with some modifications and among others, with one changing the committee from that of the public lands to a select one, Mr. Hunt, as chairman of the committee, at the same session made a report, which will be found among our printed documents, giving a succinct and lucid history of the public lands, examining with candor and skill the nature and character of the power of the Government over them and concluding with a report of a bill to favor the distribution of their proceeds. I am sure, sir, every individual now present, who was a member of this House at the period during which Mr. Hunt held a seat on this floor—a seat vacated by his lamentable death in this city—will bear witness to the talent and assiduity with which he performed all his duties here, as well as to the high minded and honorable motives which governed him, and it is no disparagement to any of the eminent statesmen who have since discussed the subject of the public lands, to say, he clearly foresees the future importance of this growing resource of the public revenue; that his report contains the germ of nearly every argument which has since been urged in favor of the constitutionality and expediency of distribution and that it has been seldom, if ever surpassed in ability.

You will perceive, sir, that this measure is not new to this House or to the country, and that long before Mr. Clay first introduced his bill into the Senate, my own constituents, in particular, had through their Representative, urged upon Congress, with earnestness and skill, the justice and propriety of the measure; and that, in now standing up as its advocate, I am not following in the lead of party, but am only expressing, as well as I am able, the long cherished and desired will of my district. Sir, I repeat what I have before said, that this measure of distribution cannot, with any propriety, be called a party measure. No particular man, no particular party, nor, save justly, claim the honor of its paternity. It is not a measure, like the many schemes of squandering the public money, which the disengaged political atmosphere of this capital has lately generated, that requires deep thought and laborious research to originate. It is the natural, spontaneous production of the minds of the great mass of the People themselves. Proceeding on the self-evident proposition, so well expressed by Gen. Jackson in his message of 1830, that "the resources of the nation, beyond those required for the immediate and necessary purposes of the Government, can no where be so well deposited as in the pockets of the People," the People look down upon their representatives, and say to them—"Gentlemen, you have got a large amount of our money which you can't profitably use—please give it back to us." The idea is perfectly simple and natural; and it would be doing manifest injustice to the common understanding of every man in the nation, to go about hunting among the giant minds of our statesmen to discover its origin.

Mr. Chairman, I shall not trespass on the patience of the committee by repeating the arguments which have been so well and so conclusively stated by others, to show the constitutionality and propriety of a distribution of the proceeds of the public lands. It has been shown to this committee, by gentlemen who have preceded me in this debate, and particularly by the gentlemen from Virginia (Mr. McCormick) and Kentucky, (Mr. Underwood,) that the distribution is not only in conformity with the Constitution, but is, so far as the important section of Virginia is concerned, imposed upon Congress as a duty by itself. The resolution, I suppose, of Congress in 1826, that "the resources of the nation, beyond those required for the immediate and necessary purposes of the Government, can no where be so well deposited as in the pockets of the People," the People look down upon their representatives, and say to them—"Gentlemen, you have got a large amount of our money which you can't profitably use—please give it back to us." The idea is perfectly simple and natural; and it would be doing manifest injustice to the common understanding of every man in the nation, to go about hunting among the giant minds of our statesmen to discover its origin.

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Sir, another objection made against this bill is, that by placing the States in a dependent position on the general Government, it will tend to reduce consolidation. This, I think, is also one of the Veto objections. This objection is not only overthrown by the argument contained in the President's Message of 1826, but contradicted by a new argument which has lately come into fashion. The argument is this—that the States, by abstracting the funds from the National Treasury, will become omnipotent, and leave the General Government too weak to carry on its necessary operations. Gentlemen, sir, that this argument, coming as it does, from gentlemen claiming to have in their peculiar keeping the principles of the old Republican party, strikes my ears rather gratifying. But this is a day of new things, and I suppose we must brace up our nerves to stand the shock of anything, however strange or unexpected. I thought that if there was any one principle which stood out above all others as the platform on which the old Republican party was founded, it was that the danger to our system arose from the weakness of the States, and the too great and absorbing power of the General Government; but now, friends, we are exhorted, in the hallowed names of Republicanism and Democracy, not to distribute to the States a surplus revenue which the General Government does not need, and cannot use, for fear of endangering the system, by strengthening the power of the States! sir, this objection, like the other, taxes my generosity too heavily. I can't go it.

Mr. Chairman, an objection has been raised against the bill on your table, because it proposes to give the new States some ten per cent. on the amount of the sales of the lands within their respective limits, for the purpose of internal improvement, before the general distribution is made; and, for this reason, it is said the distribution is unequal and unjust to the old States. Sir, this objection is not only answered by the uniform practice of the Government, which I have before stated, to make, as a means of enhancing the value and increasing the sales of the lands, grants of lands for such purposes; but by the fact that the additional ten per cent. may be deemed necessary to place the new States on an actual equality with the old; for the reason that the former have increased much more rapidly in population, since the last census, than the latter; of which increase in the new States the amount of their respective land sales is the best practical measurement. But the objection is contradicted and overthrown by another, still more extraordinary. Sir, in a public document*, where I find this objection most strongly urged, and most laboriously insisted on, the final views of the author are summed up in the following language—I give it verbatim et literatim: "I do not doubt that it is the real interest of each and all the States in the Union, and particularly of the new States, that the price of these lands shall be reduced and gradually, and that after they have been offered for a certain number of years, the refuse, remaining unsold, shall be abandoned to the States." Yes, sir, we are told that it is unconstitutional, a violation of compact, and unjust to the old States, to allow the new States, in a measure of general distribution, a small percentage on the amount of the sales; and yet, that, after a few thousand acres more are sold, it will be perfectly constitutional, in clear conformity with compact, and perfectly just to the old States, to allow the new States to keep the whole of the lands to themselves. I do not doubt that it is the real interest of each and all the States in the Union, and particularly of the new States, that the price of these lands shall be reduced and gradually, and that after they have been offered for a certain number of years, the refuse, remaining unsold, shall be abandoned to the States." Yes, sir, we are told that it is unconstitutional, a violation of compact, and unjust to the old States, to allow the new States, in a measure of general distribution, a small percentage on the amount of the sales; and yet, that, after a few thousand acres more are sold, it will be perfectly constitutional, in clear conformity with compact, and perfectly just to the old States, to allow the new States to keep the whole of the lands to themselves.

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